



The Seller (extreme right) tells the tale of her grandfather The Victim (third from left) in Framed, by Adolf.

THEATRE REVIEW (SINGAPORE): 'FRAMED, BY ADOLF' BY CHONG TZE CHIEN AND THE FINGER PLAYERS

👤 Sharmila Melissa Yogalingam 🕒 July 4, 2018 👁 153 Views

The Finger Players presented *Framed, by Adolf* by Chong Tze Chien at the Victoria Theatre from 15 to 17 June 2018.

Written and directed by Chong Tze Chien, this play tells the tale of The Seller (Serene Chen) who has inherited a painting from her Jewish grandfather The Victim (Joshua Lim) who told her that it was a painting done by Hitler. In the present day, The Seller tries to get the painting authenticated and sold, but in the process she speaks of the journey that The Victim took during the war – where this painting was his only companion at times.

It is this precise journey of The Victim that makes this play captivating, amidst the wordiness of the scenes that portray the present day. Using puppetry, shadow play, and clever direction, the production takes the audience to the Holocaust and the War, and shows how The Victim who is Jewish survived by pretending to be a Nazi – an act that comes back to haunt him later.

However, despite The Finger Players being known for their use of puppets, at times the puppetry and backdrop projections were overwhelmed by the action unfolding on stage, and didn't really serve any effective storytelling purpose.

Having said that, the acting was very good, with Chen and Lim shining in their roles. Chen is clear in her speech and enunciation whilst presenting us with a layered character. Lim has great comedic timing in his portrayal of the naïve, innocent, and not-so-bright grandfather.

One does wonder though why the cast portraying the German characters didn't sport the correct accent, as the Singaporean accent sounded odd and ill-fitting for those Jewish and Nazi characters.



The Seller (Serene Chen, extreme right) narrates the early life of her grandfather The Victim (Joshua Lim, extreme left)

Those small points aside, *Framed, by Adolf* has its moments of wit and humour, as well as fascinating insight. All in all, this production provided an interesting exploration of what has gone down in history as one of humankind's darkest periods.

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